

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8 and 12-17 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment cancels Claims 9-11, and amends Claims 12-14 and 16.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 9, 10 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 11 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Xing et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,545,883). Claims 9-11, 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Svardsjo (U.S. Patent No. 5,907,481). Claims 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Xing et al. in view of Pruitt (U.S. Patent No. 4,761,722).

However, Claims 1-8 were allowed and Claim 12 was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter. In response, Claim 12 is rewritten in independent form, and Claims 13-14 and 16 are amended so that Claims 13-17 are dependent from Claim 12. Accordingly, Claims 12-17 are believed to be allowable.

In response to the rejections of Claims 9-11 and 13-17, these rejections are now moot in view of the present amendment canceling Claims 9-11 and rendering Claims 13-17 dependent from allowable Claim 12.

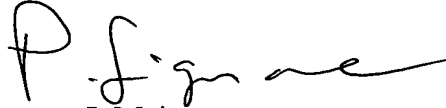
Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-8 and 12-17 is earnestly solicited.

Application No. 10/662,529
Reply to Office Action of April 13, 2004

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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